

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for oxidation of an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent, comprising reacting the aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to oxidize the alkyl substituent into an aldehyde group in a presence of a catalyst consisting essentially of metal particles of Ag and/or Au supported on a carrier in an aprotic polar organic solvent.

2. (Currently amended) A method for oxidation of an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent, comprising reacting the aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to oxidize the alkyl substituent into an aldehyde group in a presence of a catalyst consisting essentially of metal particles of Ag and/or Au, and one or more group VIII elements supported on a carrier in an aprotic polar organic solvent.

3. (Previously presented) A method for producing an aromatic aldehyde compound, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to produce the aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 1.

4. (Currently amended) A method for producing an aromatic carboxylic acid ester, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule in a presence of a catalyst consisting essentially of metal particles of Ag and/or Au supported on a carrier in a primary alcohol to produce ~~an aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 1, and then reacting the aromatic aldehyde compound with a primary alcohol to produce the aromatic carboxylic acid ester.~~ the ester of an aromatic carboxylic acid with the primary alcohol.

5. (Previously presented) A method for producing an aromatic aldehyde compound, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen

molecule to produce the aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 2.

6. (Currently amended) A method for producing an aromatic carboxylic acid ester, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule in a presence of a catalyst consisting essentially of metal particles of Ag and/or Au, and one or more group VIII elements supported on a carrier in a primary alcohol to produce ~~an aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 2, and then reacting the aromatic aldehyde compound with a primary alcohol to produce the aromatic carboxylic acid ester.~~ the ester of an aromatic carboxylic acid with the primary alcohol.

7. (Previously presented) The method for oxidation according to claim 2, wherein the catalyst consists essentially of metal particles of Ag and/or Au and metal particles of one or more group VIII elements separately supported on a carrier, or metal particles of an alloy or an intermetallic compound of Ag and/or Au and one or more group VIII elements supported on a carrier.

8. (Previously presented) A method for producing an aromatic aldehyde compound, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to produce the aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 7.

9. (Currently amended) A method for producing an aromatic carboxylic acid ester, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule in a presence of a catalyst consisting essentially of metal particles of Ag and/or Au and metal particles of one or more group VIII elements separately supported on a carrier, or metal particles of an alloy or an intermetallic compound of Ag and/or Au and one or more group VIII elements supported on a carrier in a primary alcohol to produce ~~an aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 7, and~~

~~then reacting the aromatic aldehyde compound with a primary alcohol to produce the aromatic carboxylic acid ester.~~ the ester of an aromatic carboxylic acid with the primary alcohol.

10. (New) The method for oxidation according to claim 1, wherein the oxidation is carried out in a presence of water and/or a polyol.

11. (New) The method for oxidation according to claim 2, wherein the oxidation is carried out in a presence of water and/or a polyol.